

**Andrew Jackson to James Monroe, March 18, 1817,
from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by
John Spencer Bassett.**

TO PRESIDENT MONROE.¹

¹ In Parton's *Jackson*, II. 369, in a revised form.

Private

Nashville, March 18, 1817.

Dear Sir: I had the pleasure this day of receiving your letter of the 1st Instant, that by Genl Barnard, I have not recd., I learn by this days mail, that he has reached Knoxville and will be on in a few days.

My friend Judge Campbell, was fully authorised by me to make the communication to you that he did, and I hope, gave you, fully my reasons for my determination and wishes on that head.

I have no hesitation in saying, you have made the best selection to fill the Department of State that could have been made. Mr Adams, in the hour of difficulty will be an able helpmate, and I am convinced, will give general satisfaction—no persons stands higher in my Estimation than Governor Shelby, he is a well tried Patriot, and I have no doubt, if he accepts, will with a virtuous Zeal as far as his abilities may enable him, discharge the duties of his office. But sir, I cannot disguise, my feelings on this occasion, that sincere friendship I have for you and my anxious solicitude for your Public and pr[i]vate welfare, compells me to be candid, and say to you that the acquirements of this worthy man are not competant to a discharge, of the multiplied duties of the Department of War, I therefore

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hope he may decline the acceptance of the office for should he accept, I am fearfull, he will not add much splendor to his present well Earnt standing as a public charector. Should he accept, be assured, that as long as I remain in the army It will afford me great pleasure, in obeying your orders through him, and rendering his duty Easy and pleasant, as far as it may be in my power

I am aware of the dificulties that surround you; But the plan you have adopted, of making all considerations, subserviant to the general weal, will bring you to retirement with the applause of all the virtuous, wise, and good, and if properly seconded by the congress of the u states (of which I have much fear) will enable you, to place the union, in a state of security and prosperity, that cannot be shaken by foreign convulsions. To this end you can calculate with confidence on all my feeble exertions, so long as my constitution, may permit me to be usefull. I have looked forward to the period, when under your guidance, our government would be in the full tide of successfull experiment, when I would retire from public life, to endeavour to regain a much enfebled constitution, should you be properly seconded, in your views, This period will arive, as soon as the measures you adopt for the defence of the frontier, is caryed into effect—by a completion of those fortifications, that have or may be selected for its defence founderies and armourys established, the militia organized and classed, agreable to your recommendation to congress in the spring of 1815. *Then we will have peace* , for then we will be prepared for war. Every man with a gun in his hand, all urope combined, cannot hurt us, and all the world will be anxious to be upon friendly terms with us, because all the world will see, we wish peace with all, but are prepared for defence against all those who would wantonly infringe our national rights

accept assurances of my best wishes, and believe me to be respectfully yr mo, ob, serv,